

## Message Text

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43

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 AID-05

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P 312315Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9230

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

UNCLAS SAN JOSE 0441

PANAMA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CS

SUBJECT: PRESS REACTION OF VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

1. ALL MORNING PAPERS IN SAN JOSE ON JANUARY 31 CARRIED FRONT-PAGE REPORTS OF THE SHORT VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS TO COSTA RICA YESTERDAY. WHILE LA REPUBLICA AND LA HORA REPORTED ROGERS' AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE IN A FAIRLY NEUTRAL TONE, EXCELSIOR AND LA NACION WERE EFFUSIVE IN THEIR PLEASURE AT ROGERS' PRESENCE AND ALSO PROVIDED EXTENSIVE COMMENTS ON ROGERS' "CLOSED-DOOR" MEETING WITH PRESIDENT ODUBER AND FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO AT THE PRESIDENT'S HOME. THE PHOTOS WERE UPBEAT AS WELL, ONE SHOWING ODUBER AT THE WHEEL OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CAR DRIVING ROGERS AWAY AND ANOTHER CAPTURING THEIR WARM EMBRACE UPON MEETING.

2. LA REPUBLICA, IN ITS COVERAGE OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE, REPORTED ROGERS' STATEMENT ON THE OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE OF THE TRADE BILL FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES IT PROMISES FOR TARIFF REDUCTIONS WHICH WILL BENEFIT ALL NATIONS, INCLUDING LATIN AMERICA, AND HIS VIEW THAT THE PROBLEM OF THE TRADE BILL FOR LATIN AMERICA WAS POLITICAL

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NOT ECONOMIC. LA HORA, IN BRIEFER COVERAGE, STRESSED

MANY OF THE SAME POINTS. BOTH PAPERS REPORTED ROGERS' COMMENT THAT THE U.S. IS SEARCHING FOR A BALANCED SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.

3. GOVERNMENT-ORIENTED EXCELSIOR COVERED THE PRESS CONFERENCE IN GREAT DETAIL AND IN COMPLIMENTARY TERMS. IT DESCRIBED ROGERS AS ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS OF THE PRESS "WITH SURENESS AND CONVICTION" AND AS "UNDERSTANDING WELL" THE POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF THE TRADE BILL. IN A SECOND FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE ON THE VISIT, EXCELSIOR CLAIMED THAT SECRETARY ROGERS CAME HERE TO ASK COSTA RICA TO MEDIATE FOR THE U.S. WITH THE OTHER LATIN NATIONS IN SOLVING THE CURRENT CRISIS IN HEMISPHERE RELATIONS. THIS EXPLANATION APPEARS, FROM THE TEXT, TO HAVE COME FROM PRESIDENT ODUBER HIMSELF IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS.

4. LA NACION, WHOSE REPORTER WAS NOT AT ROGERS' ARRIVAL PRESS CONFERENCE, HEADLINED ITS STORY -- "COSTA RICA CHOSEN AS MEDIATOR FOR THE U.S. IN THE CURRENT CRISIS IN LATIN AMERICA." THE NEWSPAPER'S STORY WENT ON TO REPORT THAT, IN REPLY TO ROGERS' QUESTION TO ODUBER ON HOW TO SOLVE THE CURRENT PROBLEM, ODUBER TOLD HIM THAT "THE KEY" TO THE SOLUTION IS NON-INTERFERENCE WITH LATIN AMERICAN POLICY. ODUBER THEN OFFERED HIS GOOD OFFICES TO SEND THE MESSAGE TO OTHER LATIN PRESIDENTS THAT THE U.S. WANTS TO CONTINUE THE NEW DIALOGUE. THE PRESIDENT REPORTEDLY TOLD LA NACION THAT "THE FRUITS OF THIS SIGNIFICANT VISIT WILL BE SEEN SOON."

5. ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO EDITORIAL COMMENT YET, THE PRESS REPORTING REVEALED THE POSITIVE NOTE STRUCK BY ROGERS' VISIT. ODUBER'S QUOTED REMARKS CAPTURED THE OVERALL TONE OF THE SHORT VISIT, "HE HAS BEEN FOR MANY YEARS A FRIEND OF COSTA RICA. HIS NOMINATION TO THE POST HE NOW HOLDS MEANT TO US THE GREAT POSSIBILITY OF UNDERSTANDING IN ALL KINDS OF PROBLEMS." CLIPPINGS WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE DEPARTMENT.

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Reference:** n/a  
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**Review Authority:** greeneet  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 NOV 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <19 NOV 2003 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2003 by greeneet>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
05 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESS REACTION OF VISIT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS  
**TAGS:** PFOR, CS, US, (ROGERS, WILLIAM D)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006